

Norman Board of Parks Commissioners
June 4, 2020

The Norman Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met on the 4th day of June, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at 201 West Gray Street, 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

ITEM 1, being:

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Wright and Commissioners Dolan, Favors, Isacksen, Moxley, Ross and Sallee

Absent: Commissioners May and Salmond

City Officials

Present: Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation
James Briggs, Park Planner
Jason Olsen, Recreation Superintendent
Wade Thompson, Parks Superintendent
Sarah Kaplan, Retail Marketing Coordinator

ITEM 2, being:

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 9, 2020 MINUTES

Commissioner Dolan made the motion and Commissioner Moxley seconded to approve the agenda. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Dolan, Favors, Isacksen, Moxley, Ross and Sallee

NAY: None

ITEM 3, being:

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Isacksen made the motion and Commissioner Sallee seconded to approve the agenda. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Dolan, Favors, Isacksen, Moxley, Ross and Sallee

NAY: None

ITEM 4, being

CONSIDERATION OF PARK LAND DEDICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE NORMAN REGIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM EAST CAMPUS ADDITION

Mr. James Briggs, Park Planner, said Norman Regional Health System East Campus Planned Unit Development (PUD) Addition is located in Section 9 of Township 8 North, Range 2 West of the Indian Meridian. He said this addition is located on the west side of 24th Avenue SE, across the street from the Pebble Brook Addition, on the south side of State Highway 9, along Ann Branden Boulevard, east of the old "Perfect Swing" entertainment venue and north of the St. James Addition. Mr. Briggs said the addition is mostly comprised of a mix of hospital and other health care institutional buildings and commercial or retail property, with one block of residential development for long-term living units. He said there are 100 units of RM-6 type development in the PUD; requiring .4425 acre of park land. Mr. Briggs said the other land uses indicated on the PUD do not require any park land dedication.

This development will yield \$7,500 in Neighborhood Park Development Fees and the same amount in Community Park Development fees once all building permits have been issued. Mr. Briggs said the developer has requested a Fee-in-Lieu of land decision for this project; and Staff agrees with that proposal; with the fees collected for this addition being assigned to the Pebble Brook Park development account which is located just east of the development, at the end of Overbrook Drive. The developer also shows some landscaping, water features and walking trails in the development, including sidewalks that will lead to a crosswalk on 24th Avenue to allow residents to walk down Overbrook Drive to the public park, if so desired.

Mr. Briggs said Staff recommends that the Board of Park Commissioners make a fee-in-lieu land decision for the Norman Regional Health System East Campus PUD Addition. He introduced Mr. Gunner Joyce of Rieger Law Group, representative for the developer, who was in attendance and available for questions.

Commissioner Sallee asked Mr. Joyce what is being proposed for the commercial segment of the Norman Regional Health System East Campus PUD Addition and Mr. Joyce said the entire site is a PUD, but an "end user" for the commercial property (C-2) has not been identified yet. Chair Wright asked if the addition will be similar to what is located by the Norman Healthplex and Mr. Joyce said yes, that is the goal.

Commissioner Isacksen felt the proposed sidewalks that will connect to 24th Avenue SE need to have a painted crosswalk so it will be safer for pedestrians to cross the street. Mr. Briggs agreed and said a crosswalk should be installed. Commissioner Moxley asked if the fee-in-lieu collected will go to Pebble Brook Park and Mr. Briggs said yes, stating the fees will be used in combination with Norman Forward funding to replace/upgrade the park. Mr. Briggs said Staff will conduct a neighborhood survey to determine what neighborhood priorities are for the park.

Commissioner Moxley made the motion and Commissioner Dolan seconded to approve a fee-in-lieu of park land decision for the Norman Regional Health System East Campus PUD Addition. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Dolan, Favors, Isacksen, Moxley, Ross and Sallee

NAY: None

ITEM 5, being

ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM THE FIREHOUSE ART CENTER

Mr. Douglas Elder, Executive Director, highlighted the Norman Firehouse Art Center's (FAC)'s mission statement and goals stating FAC enriches our community by offering the highest quality visual arts education, experiences, and exhibition. He said support from the City of Norman is imperative in assisting us to achieve our mission, including the provision of accessible visual arts programming for underserved groups such as adults with disabilities, U.S. Armed Forces Veterans, and youth from disadvantaged socioeconomic circumstances. Mr. Elder highlighted the Goals for 2019-2020 to include long-term, operations and organizational development, financial, and education.

Mr. Elder highlighted the class fee structures for children and adult classes. Mr. Elder said FAC offers 30-40 classes in each of four sessions throughout the year, with more than 700 adults, 50 teens, and 300 youth enrollments annually. He said FAC also provided arts education for 302 students at Lincoln Elementary School from September 2018 through May 2019. He said FAC offers seasonal workshops on a quarterly basis; these afford new and returning students a taste of the mediums and techniques offered in the longer semesters. Mr. Elder said FAC provides up to 12 scholarships a week to older adults and individuals with varying degrees of cognitive, physical, and learning disabilities through the Healing Studio which is free to participants through scholarships valued at \$30 each weekly, two-hour session.

Mr. Elder highlighted the FAC revenues to include grants, contributions, membership dues, class tuition and material fees, and gallery and gift shop sales. He said the FAC Gallery hosts exhibitions throughout the year and in 2018-2019, over 3,100 people visited and attended gallery receptions. In addition, FAC announced a Call for Entries for the Foil Sculpture which began in September 2019 and awarded \$3,000 in prizes to artists.

A 2019 organization annual report was received prior to the meeting. Commissioner Moxley said the budget reflected \$1 million in revenue and Mr. Elder said it is approximately \$500,000. Commissioner Isacksen felt it would be helpful to receive a breakdown statement of activity and/or balance sheet and Commissioner Moxley agreed that more detailed financials would be great. Commissioner Sallee asked what the "other contributions" in the amount of \$555,000 were and Mr. Elder said it is merely a budget number for the capital campaign for a new building.

The Board acknowledged the report.

ITEM 6, being

DISCUSSION REGARDING PUBLIC SAFETY MEMORIAL

Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, introduced Sgt. Robert Wasoski, Lt. Teddy Wilson, and Lt. Lee McWhorter with the Norman Police Department (NPD).

Sgt. Wasoski highlighted the proposed Public Safety Memorial that would include Norman Police Department (NPD), Norman Fire Department (NFD), Cleveland County Sheriff Office (CCSO) and EMSStat. He said the concept is to bring all of Norman's Public Safety entities together in a memorial that captures the work, sacrifice, and commitment they provide to our citizens. Further, it gives a place to memorialize those who have given their lives in that service.

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Sgt. Wasoksi said in 2019, the 100th Anniversary of the Police Department was held at Legacy Park which was a huge success and the idea to move a permanent memorial to Legacy Park was formed at that time. Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, agreed Legacy Park would be a great location for a public safety memorial and he appreciated the work the Norman Police Department has done gathering information about a permanent memorial. He said he wanted the Park Board to have a voice in this process since the memorial is proposed to be erected at Legacy Park and the next step would be a City Council Study Session.

Lt. Lee McWhorter highlighted the memorial concept and the location of the proposed memorial at Legacy Park. He said the memorial is designed to be symmetrical, even, and clean. Each of the four disciplines: NPD, NFD, CCSO, and EMSStat would be clearly defined yet they would be the same height and material so as to model that they are equal partners in serving their community.

Lt McWhorter said the memorial would be a four-foot module and with simple forms throughout the to allow the design to be a clean background to convey the meaning and sincerity of the monument. The outer ring would contain monoliths dedicated to those who have given their lives through their dedication to service and the placement of the monoliths in the outer ring confront the visitor and convey the intent of the memorial. Atop each monolith, a bronze casting identifies the department, i.e., boots/helmet/gun for NPD, fire helmet/bunkers for NFD, and a cowboy hat for CCSO. Behind each monolith sits the memorial plinth and each side dedicated to the discipline/department. Each department would be marked with a colored band which creates a visceral connection to the discipline/department non-reliant on literacy or language, i.e., NPD – blue and NFD – red. In the center of the plinth, a simple change in material represents a common core, a dedication to public serve that unifies all departments.

Lt. McWhorter showed the Board the current NPD memorial located outside the police department at City Hall. He said the proposed drawings are initial ideas and additional concepts can be included such as an eternal flame. Sgt. Wasoski said the center piece of the memorial could have an eternal flame if feasible and low maintenance. Commissioner Moxley asked whether natural gas can be gotten at Legacy Park. Mr. Foster said more information would need to be determined about natural gas and to his knowledge there is currently no natural gas on the park property.

Commissioner Dolan said this was a wonderful idea and suggested looking at a memorial at State Capital which has an eternal flame for designs. Commissioner Moxley said he likes the eternal flame idea and it may be less expensive than changing out flags. Chair Wright asked if Parks or Police would maintain the memorial and Mr. Foster said it would depend; however, Parks would look to the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and/or the Citizens Police Academy to assist. Commissioner Moxley suggested contacting the Norman Arts Council to see whether they can assist with the bronzing on the memorial

Commissioner Moxley made the motion and Commissioner Dolan seconded to support a Public Safety Memorial at Legacy Park. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Dolan, Favors, Isacksen, Moxley, Ross and Sallee

NAY: None

ITEM 7, being

DISCUSSION REGARDING BEER AND WINE IN CITY PARKS

Mr. Jason Olsen, Recreation Superintendent, said currently the City prohibits the sale of and consumption of alcohol in City Parks exempting the Firehouse Art Center, Historical Museum, Sooner Theatre, Westwood Park, Santa Fe Depot in 1987, and adding Legacy Park in 2015.

Mr. Olsen said proposed changes to the current Resolution, R-1516-31, would additional exempt Andrews Park, Reaves Park, and Lions Park as well as include Special Event Permitting. He said Andrews Park currently has Groove Fest and Jazz in June events; the Medieval Fair is held annually at Reaves Park; and Summer Breeze concerts are done at Lions Park.

Mr. Olsen said benefits of proposed changes to the current City resolution include improved festivals and events; engagement with local businesses; increased revenue for City, local businesses and event organizers; and opens the door for possible new events coming to Norman.

Ms. Sara Kaplan, Retail Marketing Coordinator, highlighted the Special Event Permit applications and said the City promotes and works with local Norman based breweries and wineries who would be preapproved to sell at the events.

Commissioner Ross said she has witnessed some citizens taking their own beer and/or wine to Summer Breeze and Jazz in June events and Mr. Olsen said he has as well. He said citizens are not supposed to bring alcohol to those parks, but it currently is not enforced. Mr. Olsen said the proposed resolution amendments would allow the event organizers to sell beer and/or wine instead of citizens bringing it to the parks with them.

Commissioner Isacksen asked Staff if there were any neighborhood concerns about the proposed amendments and Mr. Olsen said, no because the special event permitting would add certain levels and layers of security for events. Commissioner Sallee said she has concerns about young kids attending events that would sell beer and/or wine such as the Medieval Fair. Mr. Olsen said he has already had discussion with the Norman Police Department (NPD) about this concern stating the event organizer would have to submit a security plan to the NPD and the NPD would need to approve the plan. He said additionally, an area would need to be roped off at the event(s) where participants would drink either beer and/or wine.

Commissioner Sallee asked Staff if the City could be sued (if something were to happen) by allowing alcohol to be sold in additional parks and events. Ms. Kaplan said every event organizer is required to provide insurance in case of an accident or issue. Mr. Foster said there has been a lot of discussion and the Medieval Fair may not qualify for a special event permit allowing alcohol to be served.

Commissioner Moxley felt selling alcohol at events and festivals is a sign of the times and said other metro area cities are going in the same direction. Commissioner Dolan asked Staff what are the benefits to the City if alcohol is allowed at these additional parks and Mr. Olsen said the sale of permits; each vendor at the event would be a \$10 fee paid to the City; if alcohol is sold – the City could earn 10% of the alcohol sales or a \$200 fee; and sales tax would be collected. Commissioner Dolan asked where the collected fees will go and Mr. Olsen said sales tax would go into the General Fund. Mr. Foster said, as an example, each vendor would be charged a fee to set up as well as a percentage of the sales at the 4th of July event at Reaves Park. Mr. Olsen said the Beers and Cheers event at Legacy Park sold tickets to the event in order to fundraise for @Legacy Park Events, which

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is a different proposal than from what is being proposed today. Commissioner Sallee asked whether alcohol could be sold at adult softball games and Mr. Olsen said no, because adult softball game(s) are not permitted as a special event(s). Commissioner Moxley felt the City needs all the reserves it can get with the current City budget shortfall.

Commissioner Sallee made the motion and Commissioner Isacksen seconded to approve the proposed amendment to the Resolution allowing beer and wine in City parks. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Favors, Isacksen, Moxley, Ross and Sallee

NAY: Commissioner Dolan

ITEM 8, being

DISCUSSION REGARDING ADOPT A PARK PROGRAM

Mr. Wade Thompson, Parks Superintendent, highlighted the Adopt a Park/Adopt a Trail Program stating it is a volunteer program that gives the community the opportunity to work with Norman Parks and Recreation to keep its parks/trails clean and attractive. He distributed an Adopt a Park/Adopt a Trail Program application to the Board and said adopters may volunteer to maintain the parks/trails by picking up litter, maintaining beautification areas, painting, spreading playground mulch and/or other tasks approved by Norman Parks and Recreation.

The general information/expectations include: any group or organization is welcome to Adopt a Park or Trail; a one-year commitment of a full park or section of a park or trail; at least four events and/or projects per year; post-event report submitted to Parks Superintendent; and follow safety precautions: children under 15 must have adult supervision; always wear proper safety attire; report any hazards or vandalism to Norman Police and/or Parks and Recreation Departments; adequately hydrate volunteers during events; report suspicious behavior to the Norman Police Department; notify park staff once an event/project has been planned; do not work at night or during hazardous weather conditions; do not block pathways or trails; do not use herbicides within the limits of the park for weed maintenance on turf or beds; and have a first aid kit on hand.

Mr. Thompson said by adopting a park and/or trail, Norman residents, schools, clubs and service organizations, are making their parks more beautiful for everyone. The volunteer work also helps extend the benefits of tax dollars by enabling city park employees to spend more time on other projects and responsibilities. Adopt a Park allows citizens, and particularly park users, to show pride in their community. It is set up for groups to visit the park of their choice on a regular basis, pick up litter and perform other tasks to help keep the park clean and have fun while providing a community service.

Commissioner Moxley suggested Staff reach out to neighborhood home owners associations and talk to them about adopting their neighborhood parks. Commissioner Sallee asked what would some of the organized projects look like and Mr. Thompson said an example is a recent clean-up day at Sutton Wilderness Park, or a "fun day in the park". She asked if the volunteers would sign a contract and Staff said yes. Chair Wright asked if other cities used Adopt a Park Program and Mr. Thompson said yes, Edmond, Oklahoma City and many other metro cities. Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, said Norman has used this program before but it has been dormant. He said Staff would like to re-launch the program and reach out to civic groups, churches, HOA's, etc.

Commissioner Moxley asked if any homeless were back at Sutton Wilderness Park and Staff said yes; however, only a couple of people which were visited and informed about the park regulations and they left the following day. Commissioner Ross said one of her neighbors informed her that some homeless had returned to Sutton Wilderness and Mr. Thompson said he will ask Staff to check out the area. He said since there is more vegetation this time of the year it may be harder to see/find their camps. Mr. Thompson said if homeless were found in the area, a 72-hour notice to vacate is posted. He said if they leave but do not remove their belongings, Staff removes their property and it is stored for 90 days at the Norman Investigation Center (NIC). Chair Wright thanked Mr. Thompson and Staff for their continued work.

ITEM 9, being

NORMAN FORWARD PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation gave a Norman Forward Update to the Board, stating Council will consider an ordinance at the June 9, 2020 City Council meeting calling for a General Obligation (GO) Bond election in August. He said if Council calls for the August election, the voters of Norman will determine whether or not Norman Forward Projects that have a shortfall, will be funded with a GO Bond.

Ruby Grant

Great progress continues at the park with ongoing work being done on the trails, parking areas, restrooms, and pavilions. Park amenities, playground and disc golf equipment have been ordered. The estimated completion is October or November, 2020.

Griffin Park

Field grading and irrigation is complete on the southwest fields and sprigging is scheduled later this week.

Andrews Skate Park

The water storage tank has been removed and fill soil is being installed. American Ramp Company (ARC) is on site.

Rotary Park

Park Maintenance crews removed the old play equipment at Rotary Park and the new equipment has been delivered. Construction documents for the new restroom are underway. Pickleball lines have been painted on the tennis courts.

Songbird Park

Construction at Songbird Park, located south of State Hwy 9, off of 12th Avenue SE, was recently completed and the park is open to the public.

ITEM 10, being

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

Chair Wright asked how operations at the Westwood Family Aquatic Center (WWFAC) were going with the COVID-19 issues as well as how and what Staff is doing to insure safety for the citizens who visited the WWFAC. Mr. Jason Olsen, Recreation Superintendent, highlighted the hours and operations to the Board stating every 3 to 4 hours the WWFAC is closed for disinfecting and sanitizing. Commissioner Sallee asked if social distancing was being utilized at the WWFAC and

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Mr. Olsen said yes. He said the WWFAC is in Phase 2 of re-opening which includes pool capacity at 50%.

Mr. Olsen said July is "Park and Recreation Month" and is a great time to announce Adopt a Park/Trail Program.

Mr. Jud Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, said unfortunately the annual July 4th celebration at Reaves Park has been rescheduled to a Labor Day Event on Sunday, September 6th. He said the Labor Day event will include fireworks.

ITEM 11, being

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Sallee made the motion and Commissioner Ross seconded to adjourn. The vote was taken with the following results:

YEAH: Chair Wright and Commissioners Dolan, Favors, Isacksen, Moxley, Ross and Sallee

NAY: None

Passed and approved this 2nd of July 2020



Kristi Wright, Chairperson